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THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF FLORENCE MAC CARTHY.

BY DANIEL MAC CARTHY (GLAS), ESQ.

(*Continued from Vol. III., New Series,* page 295.)

THE tidings of Florence Mac Carthy's certain return to Ireland, which Donel-na-Pipy had brought with him from the court, and communicated to the Bishop of Cork, sufficed to occasion absolute consternation amongst a large community of undertakers in Munster. Roused by the shrill alarum from the episcopal trumpet, his old enemies, headed by the fiercest of them all, David Barry, the Lord Viscount Buttevant, rushed with renewed fury upon their foe; the first shaft, winged more directly, and with most of malice, at the heart of the common enemy, was shot from the bow of Barry. Florence appears, through life, to have been able to keep his personal dislikes in a wise subordination to his political requirements: in all cases *except* the single one of this Lord Buttevant. His enemies were countless! for they included every man who had a chance of deriving benefit from his ruin, every man injured by a Mac Carthy in Munster, every man who lived by inventing or discovering anything that would prove him to be dangerous, or disaffected, Spanish in heart, or popular in Desmond, every man who hated his religion, or coveted his possessions. Donell, his wife's base brother, Mac Carthy Reagh his cousin, Browne, with his convulsive clutch upon Molahuff, and David Barry, were the great captains in this army of evil wishers. Towards none of them, save Barry, does he appear to have entertained any rancour which could not be put aside when occasion required. His contention with the Brownes we shall see conducted with temper and decorum; of Donell he speaks invariably rather with contempt than with acrimony; and with his cousin of Carbery we shall see him before long holding confidential counsel "in the bay window of Kilbrittain Castle" his birth-place; but Barry was the solitary object of his especial detestation! and in *his* instance alone did he permit himself to use language unbecoming his own high breeding, and the dignity of the Privy Council to whom his letters were addressed. What had been the original cause of this rancourous feud we know not for certain; it had, in all probability, arisen out of the Desmond rebellion, in which Florence and his father, and Barry and *his* father had taken opposite sides. Whatever may have been the cause, the quarrel itself was long-lasting, and bitter. To Florence's secret handling of the bands of desperadoes who found asylum in the Earl's country, Barry attributed the frequent incursions of those robbers upon his lands; whilst to Barry's "inventions and false suggestions to Sir Thomas

Norreys," at the time of his marriage, his adversary ascribed his imprisonment. The rumour of Florence's return set half the pens of Munster into motion; whilst Browne hastened to kindle alarm in the mind of Sir Edward Denny, the old enemy of Herbert, an undertaker like himself—Barry with similar purpose bestowed upon the Lord Chief Justice, Sir John Popham, a spirited chapter of the biography of Donell, which must have forcibly reminded that eminent judge of the adventures, and the companions of his own youth. Popham needed little solicitation to induce him to exert any influence he might possess to injure Florence. He, and his son-in-law Rogers, as the reader will perceive presently, had been disappointed in their endeavours to place themselves as undertakers in Carbery; we shall at a later period see them making a fresh and equally unsuccessful attempt upon Florence's patrimonial estates.

"1589. *March* 4.

"John Popham placed himself at Mallow being but 6000 acres, and at the earnest request of Sir Thomas Norreys and sundry of the Gent. undertakers left it unto Sir Thos. Norreys, who expecting to have been placed at Imokilly, and finding no place there, for that it is all claimed as chargeable lands, sent his people to the Bantry, where Edward Rogers, Esq^re. was to have been placed; and finding there in all not passing 4000 acres, the place being far off and dangerous, and all the rest thereabouts claimed by others of the Irish, is driven, and the same Edw^d. Rogers also, to return all their people, saving some few that of themselves are contented still to stay there. John Beecher hath the one-half of Kinalmeaky passed unto him by patent; he sold not, nor yet doeth enjoy it quietly, in respect of Mac Carthy Reagh, and the O'Mahons, although the titles were this summer adjudged against Mac Carthy Reagh, and therefore not many people are there as yet. Hugh Worth hath the other moiety of Kinalmeaky, who hath received the like disturbance, and therefore hath had few there.[1]

"J. Popham."

The undertaking of lands in Ireland, some of which were declared forfeited by royal decree, others by a less ceremonious process of the undertakers themselves, may not have been without its risks, but certainly it must have had also its attractions to have retained so enduring a hold upon the mind of this great legal functionary. When filling the high office of Her Majesty's Attorney-General, he had found time to visit Ireland, and make a personal survey of the lands of several of the native chiefs, which, though not yet forfeited by their owners, nor formally distributable by royal letters, were looked upon as in effect available to any one with sufficient capital to occupy them, and sufficient interest to secure

[1] The spelling of this document has been modernised.

their possession when occupied. Upon that occasion Popham had contracted friendship and alliance with men of similar appetite for Irish lands; hence when the terrors of Donell Pipy, and the Bishop, had spread amongst the entire body of the undertakers—"the leud men" who had scandalized Herbert—Barry at once invoked the influence of Popham for the common cause. Two years later we shall behold him making himself the medium of a renewal of every suspicion and accusation that had been current against Florence for years; at present he contented himself with laying Barry's letter, without any commentary of his own upon its contents, before the Privy Council, who were in anxious deliberation how best to put an end to the troubles of Munster, without sending thither the man who was seemingly alone qualified to do it. "Donel, the natural son of the Earl of Clancar, was playing the Robinhood worse than ever:" the enemies of Florence attributed this to "his malicious instigations, very secretly sent to him." Florence had the address to persuade Cecyll that no one but himself could put an end to these disorders; but the distrust of the Queen was not so easily overcome; she still hesitated to give her consent for his return to Ireland. Matters got rapidly worse: "the Bastard was out with some forty swords." "Browne was yet living in hopes of his head;" but that wicked head was still safe, and full of evil devices "against all men who wore hose after the English fashion." "Good Sir Thomas," nearly at his wit's end, suggested to the minister the policy of giving him a free pardon, and taking him and his loose men into the Queen's pay and employment; but in the mean time he assisted Browne with what means he could, to hunt him further into the wilderness. Sir William Herbert also, forgetful of former quarrels, made common cause with the chief assailant of the common nuisance. In return "Donell robbed Herbert's man of seven pound and his weapon." The next tidings of this restless spirit that reached the Privy Council, and quickened their deliberations, was that "he had spoiled and preyed the Abbey of Bantry." Other exploits of his are duly set forth by Barry, who little suspected that his narrative could have brought upon him the very evil that he was striving to avert.

"*Endorsed*, 1593. *March* 22. *The* Lord Buttevant *to the R^t.Hon^ble and his good Lord* Sir John Popham, *K^t. L. Chife Justice of Englande geve this.*

"R^t. Hon^ble Having ben bolde to trouble y^r Honor wth sundry my former tedious l^res, and having receivid that contynuall favur att y^r hands as I cannot well tell howe to requite the same, yet never the lesse I shall and wilbe to the uttermoste of my power att y^r comandment, and therefore psuminge the more upon the contynuance of y^r Hon^ble fav^r, I thought good to advertise you of certein rebellious attempts offred here lately by

Daniell, the base son of the Earle of Clancarty who, wthin this moneth, by meanes of certein directons and adũtisements of Florence Mac Cartyes sent hither very secreatlye unto him, as I understand, The said Daniell hath hanged a man belonginge to Mr. Nicholas Browne, and to his father[1] Sir Owen O'Sullevan, and hath also murthered one Patricke Garland, both good servitors, and besids geven two onsetts to kill Sir Own is eldest soñ; and diuers other bad attemptes hath ben by him geven. His company is not great, not above fortie, and therefore the more dangerous, What mischiefes may ensue by him, to avoide tediousnes, I refer to y^r L^p ; but to be briefe wth y^r Honor, I do assure you, yf the said Florence do once escape from thence, and have any scope, considering what practizes the said Florence formerly used wth Daniell Graney, for his rebellions in Kinelmeaky, and delivering him his own weapon to attempt those bad enterprisses that he toke in hand, it cannot be, but that he will nowe run to farr more dangerous dealings, whereby may ensue chardges to Her Ma^tie, and great losse and ruine to this poore cõmonwealth ; to w^ch as I knowe y^r honor to beare a zealous fav^r, so wth this smale caveat, taking my leave, I humbly betake the care thereof to y^r Ho^r, and y^r Ho^r to Goddes tuicion

"Barries Coũrte, the 22^d of Marche, 1592.

"DAVID BUTTEVANTE."

Notwithstanding the military promenade of the Earl of Clancarthy to his off-lying lands of Clandonell Roe, referred to in a previous page, and the excesses of his son, which Barry called "rebellious attempts," the province of Munster was unusually tranquil; discontent indeed there was, and, considering the behaviour of the undertakers, "the indiscreet and lewd men" whose association was so revolting to Sir William Herbert, it was, to use that gentleman's words, "wonderful they were so quiet as they were;" abundant rumours of brooding rebellion there also were; but, except within the unapproachable wilds and bogs of Donell's country, every part of the province was in obedience. The same complaints respecting Donell which Barry had sent to the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Thomas Norreys had written to Lord Burghley; that some remedy was urgent for disorders so scandalous, practised immediately under the eye of the Vice-President, became manifest to the Privy Council. The first tidings of the remedy about to be tried, the first proof which my Lord Barry received of the effect of his letter to Popham, must have fallen upon his perception as something utterly fabulous, and incredible. Florence continued to urge his suit to be allowed to return to Ireland; he was now driven, besides, to petition for "some means for his support, and for money to satisfy his creditors." Out of the complaints of Barry, and the disorders of Donell, the ingenuity of Elizabeth, or of her ministers,

[1] Father-in-law. Browne had recently married Sir Owen's daughter.

or the far more fertile mind of Florence himself, extracted the motive, and the resources for the acceding to both of his petitions. Florence had at last succeeded in persuading the Queen, as he had persuaded her ministers, that no man but himself was competent to deal with the turbulent Donell; but to effect such a service without money was more than even he could undertake; and to draw money from the Queen's Exchequer for any purpose merely Irish, was nearly a hopeless attempt. Florence was far too prudent to essay it; his ingenuity discovered an alternative, which he could scarcely have proposed, without a smile, or Lord Burghley, who was, as Camden informs us, "a man of reverend presence, and undisturbed countenance," have listened to with that gravity for which he was admired in his generation. It happened that on the death of Barry's father, in prison, for his participation in the Desmond rebellion, great interest had been needed to save the blood of the son from attainder, and his estates from forfeiture; these misfortunes had only been averted by the imposition of a fine of £500. Many years had gone by; and as no measures had been taken to enforce the payment of this sum, Barry and his friends had long looked upon it as a mere bond for good behaviour. That the man whose contemptuous marriage he had been amongst the first to make known to Sir Thomas Norreys; whose rebellious practices he had been incessantly occupied in watching and reporting; whose wife's brother's enormities he had so recently exhibited in all their black details; should have found any loyal man to listen to him in reviving the faded recollection of that fine, may have reasonably surprised him. How much greater surprise was in store for him, let the reader judge! Early in November, 1593, Florence Mac Carthy landed in Ireland; on the 9th of the same month was the following extraordinary letter, signed by the hand of Her Majesty, presented by him, together with another by Lord Burghley, to the Lord Deputy.

"Florence M^{c}Carty

"*Rot. Mem.* 34–45 *Eliz. Inrolment at request of ffloreuce M^{c}Cartie Gent.*[1]

"Elizabeth.

"Right trustie and welbeloved wee grete youe well Whearas the Viscount Barry havinge in the last rebellion associate himselfe to the late traitor the Earle of Desmonde was afterwardes receved to his submission in the time of the Goveremt. of the Lo. Graie our late Deputie in that

[1] For this inrolment the author is indebted to the kindness of Herbert F. Hore, Esq., whose competency, and readiness, to assist any effort to elucidate the history of Ireland are well known. In Her Majesty's "State Paper Office" is preserved the original letter to the Lord Deputy, the one, probably, which Florence took with him to Ireland. It is characteristic of Florence's extreme wariness that he should have caused it to be thus officially inrolled.

Realme uppon condicion of a fine acknowledged by him for his said offences to our said Deputie and Councell of the soñe of five hundred pounds to our use, the paiement wherof hathe since been respited Wee let youe understand that knowinge noe cause whie wee should anie longer forbeare the same, and havinge w^th^all a disposicion to relieve fflorence M^c^Cartie a subeicte of that our Realme who hathe desearved to have soñe gracious consideracõn to be had of him, Wee are pleased to bestowe on him the benefitt of the said fyne of the Viscounte Barries, wherefore wee will and comaunde you that uppon the Receipte herof youe cause the Record of the fine to be sought out and theruppon to ꝓcead by estreate or other ꝓces of our Exchequior to extend and recover the same And beinge recovered to give Warraunte to the officers of our Exchequior theare to make paiem^t^ therof to the said fflorence M^c^Cartie or his assignes as of our ffree gifte and liberalitie without accompte impreste or other chardge to be sett uppon him for the same, And thease our lrẽs shalbe to youe and to them sufficient Warraunte for the doinge herof.

"Geven under our Signett at our Castle of Windesore the viij^th^ of August 1593 in the xxxv^th^ yeare of our reigne.

"To our right trustie and welbeloved Sir William fitz Willms Knight our Deputy of our Realme of Ireland, or to anie other Deputie Justice or other Governor of our said Realme that herafter for the time shalbe."

Had a thunderbolt fallen upon the Baronial residence of Barriescourt, or upon the Episcopal palace of the Lord Bishop of Cork and Cloyne; had her sacred Majesty suddenly bestowed the fiercely contested signory of Molahuff upon Donell the bastard, greater astonishment could not have fallen upon their several owners than was occasioned by this startling letter of the Queen! Her Majesty knew no cause why Barry should not pay his fine! nor why she should not bestow the same upon Mr. Florence Mac Carthy, "who had deserved to have some gracious consideration to be had of him"! Had Florence been allowed, himself, to prepare the draft of this epistle, he could scarcely have selected language better suited to confirm the opinion entertained by his own people of the influence he possessed at court; nor could he have found phrases more contemptuous towards the man whom, upon all occasions, he emphatically styles "myne adversary." Needy as he was, it is probable that he would not have sold this £500 fine for double the sum counted out of Her Majesty's Exchequer. Barry might—as indeed he seems to have done—have considered the incident a mere spiteful pleasantry; but Browne, and a host of others, could not fail to interpret it as it was plainly meant; the Privy Council was about to attempt a new experiment in the government of Munster; Florence was the author of this novel policy; he was to be conciliated; Barry was to pay this £500 to indemnify him for his long imprisonment, and to remind that importunate correspondent that the earlier passages of his own life were not forgotten; Browne

and others might take warning from the fate of Barry. It may be doubted whether the Lord Deputy himself was less surprised, or better pleased, than the enemies of Florence, when the Queen's letter was handed to him. Barry had of late been ostentatiously loyal, he had been owing this money for ten years to the Queen, and, as he with much ingenuousness acknowledged in one of his letters, "he had always looked upon it rather as a warning to the rebellious people of his own country than as a sum ever seriously intended to be exacted from him." To pay it at all, to pay it to Florence Mac Carthy, seems at once to have fixed itself in his mind as a sheer impossibility. When invited by the Lord Deputy to pay the money, his reply was prompt and emphatic.—"He had it not." The consequence might have been foreseen; Florence claimed and received security on the lands of his adversary to the full amount of the fine, and the Deputy reported his proceedings to Lord Burghley.

"1593. *November* 10. *The* Lord Deputy Sir W. Fitz William *to* Burleigh.

"It maie please y^r^ Lo. I receavid yesterdaie two l^res^ from y^r^ Lo. by Florence Cartie, the one of the 26^th^ of August in his favor generallie, and the other of the 14^th^ of Septembre ꝑticulerly to expedite unto him her Ma^ts^ graunte of the Lo. Barries Fine of £500; besides her Majesty's allowance of him, and remittall of his concealed offence; whereunto I am ever in dutie to applie my likinge. It is, and while I live shalbe a motive sufficient to me to knowe that y^r^ Lo. doth favor him, and so will I make it appeare to him and all others, as y^r^ Lo. hath by y^r^ contynuall favors bound me: accordinglie I did forthwith uppon the readinge of your l^res^ touchinge that fine, give direc̃on to Mr. Chief Baron, a gentleman so earnest, &c. &c. &c.

"Wm. Fitz William."

"1594. *January* 20. Fitzwilliam *to* Burleigh.

"Havinge receaved by Mr. Florence M^c^ Cartie y^r^ hono^r^able l^res^ on his behalf for the recovery of the some of £500,—due by the Lo. Barry for the Fyne of his ꝑdon in the go̅ment of the Lo. Grey, wch yt hath pleased Her Moste Excellent Maty to bestowe on the said Florence, So yt is that havinge called the said Lo. Barry to aunswere whie the same shold not be paied I have so farre proceeded as there is band of recognisance taken for payment of the said Some at four se̅all payments; the first whereof beinge for £125 is payable the 2^d^. of Feb^y^. next, and so quarterlie till the whole be paied within 9 monethes, wch in answere of yo^r^ Lps favourable l^res^ on his behalf I have humblie thought good to make knowne to your Lp. And so wth harty prayer for yo^r^ prosperous success in all your affayres do take leave from Dublin the 20^th^ of Jan^y^. 1593."

Phrensied with rage and shame at "the disgrace put upon him,"

Barry rushed, without license from the Irish authorities, to court; thereby forfeited his sureties, and Florence, without delay, was put into possession of about a third of his lands. The contest for this fine, though in its early stages sufficiently curious and amusing, trained itself on into a languishing tediousness, in which the vivacity of its commencement is forgotten, and which only now and then sparkles into fleeting brilliancy by its grotesque intrusion into letters upon subjects wholly foreign to it. Between the grant and the payment there was destined to be a long interval, and the revenge proved in the sequel as costly as it was sweet. Quickly following Barry in his flight to England sped a letter from Florence, which is too remarkable to be laid before the reader without a few words of introduction. In it the writer pleads earnestly for his fine, as indeed he seldom fails to do in the multitude of letters, which, from this time forward, he is constantly writing to one or other of the ministers, or to the Privy Council. He alludes with much address to the minister's friends, Goring, Norreys, and others, whose pecuniary interests must suffer damage by the retention from him of the Queen's gracious gift, and then passes to matters which show at once the nature of the conditions on which he had obtained permission to return to Ireland. The severest struggle which England ever had to retain her hold upon Ireland was preparing. O'Neill and O'Donell felt their strength, and were already making essay of it by occasional outbreaks from their unassailable dominions upon the subjects of the Pale. Munster was evincing unmistakeable evidence of sympathy with the northern chiefs, and Florence perceived, opening before him, a career worthier of his influence and abilities than the pursuit of his revenge upon Barry, or the harassing uncertainties of litigation. He seemed on the point of commencing his political life; for "at the same moment the Vice-President desired his help in Munster, and the Lord Deputy contemplated using his services in the North." The cloud, however, passed away from Ulster for the present; Munster, in ominous sympathy, subsided into its usual state of sullen submission, and Florence fell back upon his lawsuit. That Florence Mac Carthy was in truth better able than any man living to secure the peace of his province, and to ensure to the Queen's government the adhesion of the powerful sept of which he was the most distinguished member, was a fact which the English authorities had full opportunity of knowing; and could they have safely trusted him to aid them in subjugating his own people, he might have named his own price for his services: but they not unreasonably required "some imprest of previous service," before they would wholly relax their hold upon him. That the Queen's government could more effectually ensure to Florence the great prize which his heart coveted—succession to the inheritance of Mac Carthy Mor—than any alliance with the northern chieftains could

do it, he perfectly well knew; and could he have trusted the men who put so little trust in him, he might perchance, as his father Sir Donogh had done, have kept for the remainder of his days every member of his race in obedience; but he, in his turn, naturally required "some imprest of previous benefit." Of this the only earnest yet offered to him was, that he had been allowed to return to Ireland for a prisoner's holiday; subject at any moment to a ministerial order to repair again to England, and to the Tower itself, had the Queen so willed it. The result could scarcely be satisfactory to either party. Crippled loyalty was rendered in exchange for crippled liberty. It may be well, before proceeding further, frankly to encounter a question which probably the reader has already desired to ask, and which assuredly, as this life advances, he will be anxious to have answered. Was Florence Mac Carthy true to the Queen? true to his fellow-countrymen? or true only to himself? It was the opinion of all men in his generation, both English and Irish, friends and foes, that he was "a Rebel!" To the reader of the Pacata Hibernia it would seem that he had failed his party in their extremity, and left the Sugane Earl to be crushed when he might have saved him! Uncertain whether praise or blame may attach to the first of these charges, the writer will pefer to leave it as it stood with his contemporaries; the reputation of any mere Irishman may tolerate the accusation of disloyalty to Queen Elizabeth, without any fatal detriment; at the same time we may safely assert—for it was asserted by Carewe and Sir Robert Cecyll at the time—that he had done nothing for which the law could touch him, nothing but what he had ministerial warrant for doing. That James Fitz Thomas did repeatedly urge him "boldly to cease temporizing, and join him in attacking the forces of the President;" and later, when his followers were falling from him, piteously call upon him for help, is true—if the letters published by Carewe were genuine, as doubtless they were; but he does not appear to have understood that the temporizing attitude of Florence paralyzed the arm of the President, and was alone between him and his destruction. In alarm for the safety of his own force, which he had not the skill to handle with effect, nor latterly even to keep together, the earl seems to have forgotten that at that very time Florence had watchmen upon the mountains of Desmond looking landward for the arrival of the northern earls, and seaward from the battlements of the "Old Head of Kinsale," for the coming of the Spaniards. Carewe understood the tactics of Florence better, and chafed against them as fretfully as Fitz Thomas could do. To expect to see him rush openly into action the first moment that a national banner was raised, to proceed as undisguisedly as did the northern chieftains, whose persons and possessions were beyond the reach of the English power, or like men of the stamp of Donell the Bastard, or even the younger sons and

brothers of the chiefs in his own country, men of little repute or consequence, and with no lands to lose, were greatly to misconceive his character. Florence was by nature more wary than any man of his age; he frequently received hard names from the various English authorities with whom he came in contact, men who distrusted him, and yet failed to convict him of any violation of law; and this most prominent feature of his character was the one that invariably attracted their notice; by some he was called ambitious, by others dangerous, by others mere Spanish, but one and all described him as subtle and cunning. His friends, Ormonde and Stanhope, referred to the same peculiarity in his nature, when they, with more politeness, termed it "his great prudence and wisdom." This quality, whether cunning or wisdom, acquired immense development by his experience of the English character as it was exhibited in Ireland. Had the life of Florence been written by native writers, we should probably have seen the question of his duties to the Queen considered from a point of view different from any taken by the correspondents to whom we are indebted for the uniform decision that he was an ungrateful rebel. It is likely that her Majesty would not have admitted the propriety of any reasoning upon such a subject; nevertheless there were views taken of the duties and rights of an Irish chieftain different in some important particulars from her's, and it was with these views that the Irish mind was the most familiar. Florence was the son of one of the wealthiest and most powerful of the native chiefs. His father had been pronounced by Sir Henry Sidney, an altogether "special man and good subject." He had fought for the Queen, and been graciously allowed to marry the lady of his choice, although that lady was the sister of "James Fitz Morrice the Arch Traitor," without bringing upon himself for it eleven years of exile and captivity. It is, therefore, likely that he trained his son in the prudential principles of loyalty. Unfortunately Sir Donogh died when his son was scarcely fifteen years of age, and thus there may have existed some want of completeness in his discipline as to this and other matters; but Sir Donogh undoubtedly taught his son the full measure of the rights of an Irish chief, and, as we have seen, encouraged him to enforce them at the early age of twelve years, sending him out against refractory tenants "with a train of horsemen, galloglass, and kerne, to take meat and drink with force and extortion, and to levy sums of money called cowe, not only against the will of the freeholders, but even of the cessor of the county." In Sir Donogh's days the undertaking of Irish lands had not yet been heard of; needy Englishmen, ravenous for Irish plunder, there were indeed in plenty upon the staff of the Vice-President of the province, but none of them appear to have trespassed upon the lands of Mac Carthy Reagh, hence Sir Donogh left no precedent to rule the loyalty of his son in his treat-

ment of undertakers when they came. With his education perfect upon the one subject of his rights, Florence had to trust to his own observation for its extension to many others. His experience of English views as to the use of Ireland, gained by his visit to the court, and his observation how these views were carried out by the undertakers, those indiscreet men who measured conscience by commodity, and law by lust, greatly advanced his education in a new direction; and the knowledge he eventually acquired of the worst parts of the English character gave a forced growth to that "subtlety and cunning"—prudence and wisdom—which men discovered to be the most prominent qualities of his nature. Whatever other lessons might be wanting to him upon minor points circumstances had gradually supplied. His exile and imprisonment on account of his marriage, and the invasion of his property by a swarm of undertakers and others, must have defined in his conscience with great distinctness how much of loyalty he owed to the Queen. The time came when the English ministers, rather than allow Munster to set all Ireland in a blaze, chose to make a bargain with Florence Mac Carthy. Her Majesty would make over to him an old claim, upon a man of questionable solvency, for £500; would probably pardon the offence of his marriage; probably give him his entire liberty; and probably otherwise benefit him at the death of his father-in-law; if he would assist in establishing English authority over every chieftain in Ireland, and enable her to break up, and distribute the estates of the native lords amongst such adventurers as would pledge themselves to introduce English religion and English law into his native country. The reader will scarcely need again to inquire whether Florence Mac Carthy was a loyal subject. It may appear from the letter immediately following, that Florence was playing the part of informer against his countrymen; for he tells the minister, confidentially, that several of them were likely to be discontented, and might be dangerous, and that sufficient sureties should be taken from them for their good behaviour; and prays that it may be kept secret that he had given such advice. Let the reader be assured that this was no treachery to the parties named; but a simple demonstration of the writer's great prudence and wisdom; the undertakers and the law were daily provoking these men to rebel, and Norreys and Cecyll knew, as well as Florence could tell them, that they were discontented, and likely to grow desperate; to take sureties from them might keep them from blundering prematurely into rebellion, bringing ruin upon their own heads, and thus rendering them powerless to help in the great struggle that was coming. The facility with which, after an absence of six years from Ireland, Florence could at once raise 400 men of his own people for any cause, even for the Queen's, and that without himself so much as going amongst them, can scarcely have escaped the keen observa-

tion of the Secretary. But Florence's services were not required; the northern chieftains were not yet ready; the danger seemed to have been overrated, and for a time matters became again tranquil. Four years more were to pass by before Florence's political life should begin, and it needed that full period to enable him to overcome the distrust of the English Privy Council, and to obtain the Queen's authority to enter upon the inheritance fallen to him by the demise of his wife's father.

"1594. *March 16th.* FLORENCE MAC CARTHY *to* BURGHLEY.

"Right honorable, and my most approved good Lo. My humble and bonden dutie remembered; having deliūd the Lo. deputie yo^{r} lops: letters, concerning myself, and the fine of v. hundred^{li} due of the Lo. Barry, w^{ch} yo^{r} Lop. obtained of her Matie for me, wherupon I found his Lop. very willing to fauor me, And fynding in the rowles of the Chauncery, the fiant of the sayd Lo. Barry is pardon, wherein he acknowledged the sayd fyne, and also his recognizance, in the councell book for the paime^{t}. thereof I received theruppon (by order of the Lo. Deputie and councell) sufficient assurance for the paiment of the sayd fyne; yett notwthstandinge the Lo. Barry hath not onely broken his promess wth the Lo. Deputie and councell, but also forfetted what assurance he made, and is gon oū into England, contrary to the Lo. Deputie and councells pleasnre and to the Vicepresident of Mounsters cōmaundemēt, wherefore I humblie beseech yo^{r}. Lo^{p} (as I have allwayes found you my most hono^{r}able good Lo. and chefest frend) that it may please yo^{r} Lo^{p} now to be a mean, that the sayd Lo. Barry may not obtaine any thing that may hinder or preudice me in my sayd suit, nor in the benefitt of the recognizance w^{ch} he hath forfetted, and which is myne by an order out of the Excheq^{r}, the rather that he hath by his going oū in that sorte disobeyed her Ma^{ts} lawes and pleasure and contemned the state here, wherein yf he be borne wthall, it shall be a great example and occasion of disobedience to all this realme, as the Lo. Deputie and councell hath at large enformed now by their letters, he beinge also one that was with the Earle of Desmond in all the last rebellion, whereby he deserves the less fauor: besechinge yo^{r}. hon^{r}able Lo^{p} therefore that you will as well consider myne imprisōmēt. and troble these vj. yeres past by the said Barry is malicious meanes and misinformacōns. Her Ma^{tie} havinge bestowed this suite uppon me to help to satisfie my creditors for my charges dureinge my sayd troble; as also what great charges I have bene at for this matter, hauinge folowed Her Ma^{tie} for it since I was discharged at Cicester in the last progress, untill yo^{r} L^{p} got it signed at Her Highnes last being at Windsore, and since my cōminge into Ireland (I protest unto yo^{r} L^{p}) it coste me aboue £200 in lawe and othewise, and was neu^{r} able to see my wife and contrey since my cōming, being not able to absent myself from Dublinge by reason of this matter. After all which charges, trobles, and loss of time I assure yo^{r} L^{p} (on my faythe) yf the sayd Lo. Barry shold obtaine anythinge to hinder or preudice me in this matter, I haue no other meanes to live, or satisfie my crediters (hauing already in my troble morgaged and leased what living I had to Sir Thomas Norreys, Mr. George Goreing and others)

but to folow Her Ma^tie^ againe untill yo^r^ L^p^ do obtaine som meanes of Her Highnes for me whereby I may recouer my self, for the w^ch^ I wold have repaired now into Engeland, but fearing that I shold have som important occasion to serve Her Ma^tie^ here by reason of the suspic̃oons which is conceived uppon the behauiors of the Earle of Tireowen and O'Donell, who although they have bene lately w^th^ the Councell at Dundalk yet notwithstanding som of them are holden very varyable; being also edgged forward by all the people and knaves of those parts, who are growen to be very bold, whereby yf there be anything to be don against them I do purpose to goe thyther w^th^ three of four hundred men of myne owne, for I have divers who knowes all that contrey very well, hauinge (dureing my troble) served in all those parts, and are of very great estimac̃on there: Also the Earle of Clancarty is bastard, having remained in action against Her Ma^tie^ since the last yere, doth still kepe in that contrey, and because his company is so few as he may not be cutt off by service, because he doeth but lurk among som of his secrett frends, wherby nothing cann hurt him but frendship; by reason whereof Sir Thomas Norreys requested me to go thyther, where I am going now at this p'sent to see what I may do in that case, and whatsoever I may do eyther in the North or in Mounster, it shall not cost Her Ma^tie^ anythinge; Her Highness hauing alreadie bene so gracious unto me, as I shall hardlie be able to deserve it whyle I live, neyther do I desire any better reward but that Her Highness and yo^r^ Lo^p^ shall fynd that ye are not deceived in the good opinion w^ch^ Her Ma^tie^ and yo^r^ Lo^p^ was pleased to conceave of me, for the w^ch^ I will assure yo^r^ Lo^p^ of one thinge w^ch^ is that no inconvenience shall grow in Mounster but that Her Ma^tie^ and yo^r^ Lo^p^ shall understand it in time; and for that I haue bene (as I am sure yo^r^ Lo^p^ doth remember earnest with yo^r^ Lo^p^ for Dermod M^c^Owen M^c^Carthy the yong M^c^Donogh, who hauing obtained letters there came hyther, but the Lo. Deputie and Councell hauing referred him to the law, wherby I take him, and Sir Owen O'Sullevan to be greatly discontented and very desperat, therefore I take it very necessary that in the next letter concerninge matters of state that yo^r^ Lo^p^ and the Councell do write hyther the Lo. Deputie, or Sir Thomas Norreys be willed to cause those two aforenamed to fynd sufficient sureties, w^ch^ they may doe very easiely, for the Lo. Roche, M^c^Carthy Reogh, the Lo. Barry, and all the chefest men for the most parte in Mounster are their frends. Lett those sureties be taken of Sir Owen and his iii. eldest sonnes, for these rumores in the North wold greatlie stirr discontented and desperat men to evill. Thus craving pardon for my tediousnes, the rather that I think it neeessary to aquaint yo^r^ Lo^p^ at large w^th^ these circumstances w^ch^ I leaue to yo^r^ Lo^ps^ honorable consideracon, and do humblie take leaue this xvj. of March 1593.

"yo^r^ Lops most humble and bonden

"ffLOR: M^c^CARTHY.

"I humblie beseche yo^r^ Lo^p^ not to aquaint anie with these thinges that I wrote to be my doinges."

Poor Sir Owen, the Lord of Carbery, was not going to occasion any further uneasiness to Minister or Deputy. About the time this

letter was written there passed, with little notice, from the troubled world of Munster, this man, "so specious in show, so badly bent, this malicious papist." As in the case of his predecessor Sir Donogh, the opinion recorded of him by the annalists of his own country differs widely from that entertained of him by his English contemporaries! What indeed could Sir Warham St. Leger, or the men immortalized by Sir William Herbert, be likely to know of Sir Owen's piety and hospitality? Words certainly have many significations; and St. Leger's words, quoted above, may perhaps have borne a meaning not widely different from that with which his character was sketched by the Four Masters: "Malicious Papist," may have meant "pious and noble minded man!" And "badly bent" may bear the interpretation of "truly hospitable"—to men out of favour with this rough writer.

Thus is the demise of Sir Owen Mac Carthy chronicled by the Four Masters:—

"Mac Carthy Reagh (Owen son of Donell, son of Finin), Lord of Carbry died. He was a sensible, pious, and truly hospitable, and noble-minded man. Donell, the son of Cormac-na-Hoine, took his place."

We have extant a letter written by Sir Owen Mac Carthy to Lord Burghley; this letter has a postscript, and both are now presented to the reader. The style of the letter may perhaps have been suggested to Sir Owen by "his agent, the bearer," as suited to the dignity of the great minister for whom it was intended; but no agent surely assisted in the composition of that irresistible postscript! The document bears pleasing proof of the flourishing state of Sir Owen's finances; it shows also the peculiar signification which the writer attached to the office of the "Lorde High Treasurer of the Realme of Englande;" but what is of most consequence, both portions of the epistle tend to prove the justice of the character given to him by the Four Masters, that "he was a sensible man! and truly hospitable."

"1587. *December* 23. *From* Sir Owen Mac Carthy (Reagh) *to the* Rt. Hon: *and his singular good Lorde the* Lorde Burleigh, *Lorde High Treasurer of the Realme of England.*

"R^{t}. Hon: and my veray goode Lorde, my humble duetie don to yo^{r} good L^{p}. It may please yo^{r} Hono^{r} to understand, that (havinge spent so much money as I thought would suffice duringe myne aboade here, and remayning neverthelesse in debt of one hundreth pounds) I have been emboldened by your L^{ps} favourable inclynac̃on towards me, to direct the bearer myne agent, humblie praing yo^{r} Honor to deliuer unto him, in Loane for me, 2 or 3 hundred li. for which I will passe a bande from me, to see it repaied either to the Deputie or to the President of Mounster within two moneths after my landing in Ireland. And so (acknowledging myself bonde unto y^{r} L^{p} during life) I humbly take leave.

"From my Lodgings at Westmystre this 23ª of December 1587.

"I humbly besech your Hon: Lp: to respect my p'nt extremytie, and to suply my want with the Loane of one fortie ponds to refresh me theis holydayes.

"Your Honoˢable Lᵖˢ obedient at Commaⁿndment,

"OWEN CARTY.

Sir Owen had been true to the family agreement; he had not turned aside the Captaincy of Carbery from the Tanist, in favour of his own sons; and Donell Pipy, when he "took his place," took it under assurances of £10,000 to leave the usage of Tanistry as he found it. How this engagement was eventually kept the reader will see later. By the death of Sir Owen Mac Carthy, Florence became Tanist, or heir apparent of Carbery; and thus seemed approaching the fearful day, foreshadowed by Sir Warham St. Leger, when he would become Mac Carthy Reagh, and Mac Carthy Mor, and thus reunite in his own person the vast inheritance which had been divided since the days of Donel Mor-ne-Currah.

Barry in the mean time had repaired to court, where he complained loudly of injustice done to him by the Lord Deputy and the Vice-President, whom he accused of having made over "all his lands" into the hands of Florence. He then fell fiercely upon his adversary, whom he openly charged with treason against the state, and declared that he could bring witnesses to *prove* his assertions. In spite of Florence's prayer to Lord Burghley not to listen to anything that Barry might say against him, charges so grave, and made so openly, had their effect; and the minister obtained from the Queen a new order to the authorities in Ireland, to suspend for the present any further proceedings in the matter of the fine, and to call Florence before them, and examine him upon the charges which the Lord Barry would make against him.

(*To be continued.*)